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TOURISM CENTER

2018 Fairmont Area Summer and Fall Visitor Profiles: Final Report

Authored by Xinyi Qian, Ph.D.

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Southwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership
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The University of Minnesota Tourism Center is a collaboration of University of Minnesota Extension and the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, Visit Fairmont—the city's convention and visitor bureau—contracted with University of Minnesota Tourism Center to conduct a visitor profile survey during summer and fall 2018. Below is a summary of project findings (June – November 2018).

Respondents

More than half of respondents (55.6 percent) were female, and 41.7 percent were between the ages of 54 and 72 (commonly known as baby boomers). The annual household income of 39.3 percent of respondents was in the range of $50,001 – $100,000. In both seasons, Gen Xers and baby boomers were more likely to be in the over $100,000 income range. Additionally, 30.1 percent of respondents had a bachelor's degree. Close to half of summer respondents (47.7 percent) and 32 percent of fall respondents were Minnesota residents. Thirteen percent of summer respondents and 11.7 percent of fall respondents originated from Iowa. Eighteen percent of summer respondents and 12.6 percent of fall respondents came from the Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington Core Based Statistical Area (CBSA). The majority of respondents were repeat visitors, as 61 percent made between one and five visits to the Fairmont area during the past 12 months.

Trip information

Fairmont was not the final trip destination for 31 percent of respondents. In both seasons, the most frequently identified final destination was South Dakota. Respondents identified a variety of alternative destinations if they could not come to Fairmont area for their primary trip activity, and the most frequently identified was the Twin Cities during summer and Mankato during fall. Among those who were stopping over in Fairmont only, the most frequently identified reasons included lodging, needing a break, food, and gas/fuel.

Respondents spent an average of 1.8 nights in Fairmont. During summer, the four generations (Millennials, Gen Xers, baby boomers, and the oldest generations) spent a similar number of nights in Fairmont. During fall, the oldest generations spent the most days in Fairmont and millennials spent the fewest. The most frequent lodging choices included a hotel or motel (48.2 percent) and the home of a friend/relative (35.5 percent). During both seasons, the percentage of respondents from each generation staying at a hotel or motel steadily increased from youngest (millennials) to oldest. Meanwhile, millennials and Gen Xers were somewhat more likely than baby boomers and the oldest generations to stay with a friend or relative. It would be unlikely, or highly unlikely, for 55 percent of respondents to stay at a lakeside campground in Fairmont if one were available. More than half of respondents (54.0 percent) were aware of lakes in Fairmont. At least one–third were aware of parks (44.2 percent), shopping (38.6 percent) and lakeside dining (33.8 percent).

More than 35 percent of respondents (36.4 percent) traveled in a group of two. During the summer season, millennials and Gen Xers traveled in somewhat larger groups compared to baby boomers and the oldest generations. During the fall season, group sizes across the four generations were almost identical. Forty–one percent of respondents traveled with family, and more than half (51.7 percent) traveled with adults in the 51–69 age group. The highest spending category was lodging, followed by restaurants/bars, and transportation. The average personal daily spending was $108.5, although the number varied widely from visitor to visitor. During both seasons, spending by millennials was somewhat lower than the other three generations. During summer, personal daily spending across the three older generations was somewhat similar. During fall, Gen Xers spent more per person per day compared with baby boomers and the oldest generations.

Trip activities, purpose, and planning

Visiting family/friends (26.5 percent) and stopping over/passing through (16.9 percent) were the most frequently identified primary reasons for taking the trip. The most frequently identified trip activity was dining out (78.5 percent), followed distantly by shopping (33.8 percent) and visiting friends/relatives (25.6 percent). The lakes were the most frequently identified favorite tourism activity/amenity during both seasons. Interestingly, 'lakes' was also the most frequently mentioned attraction that would attract visitors to stay longer in Fairmont during both seasons.

One-third of respondents (33.6 percent) planned their trip less than one week in advance. Word of mouth (24.8 percent) and Google/Internet search (16.5 percent) were the most frequently used information sources. The majority of respondents (86.5 percent) did not change their travel plans based on information found online.

Post-trip sharing

Close to 70 percent of respondents (69.3 percent) reported they would use mobile devices more than a personal computer to share information about the trip. The three most frequently identified mediums for sharing trip information included word of mouth (48.4 percent), text messages (40.3 percent), and Facebook (38.0 percent).

Discussion

Gen Xers and baby boomers were more likely than Millennials and the oldest generations to have a household income of more than $100,000, indicating these two generations likely have more discretionary income. Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Illinois were the top five originating states. The Twin Cities Metropolitan area was an important originating market, but it was not dominant. For both seasons, the most frequently identified final destination was South Dakota. This finding is not surprising, given Fairmont's location along Interstate Highway 90.

Lodging was the most frequently identified reason for stopping over in Fairmont. This finding indicates that lodging options in Fairmont were attractive enough for travelers to stop overnight in the community. Visitors also stopped over in Fairmont for a break or food. This finding indicates the importance of maintaining rest areas and enhancing opportunities to market local dining options to travelers.

Fifty-six percent of respondents spent one or two nights in Fairmont, and a quarter did not stay overnight. Given the average length of stay and income level, destination marketing organizations might consider encouraging baby boomers to stay longer during summer and Gen Xers during fall. As a hotel/motel was the most frequently chosen lodging type and baby boomers and Gen Xers were more likely to stay at a hotel during fall than summer, one possibility is for hotels to offer two or three day packages that target baby boomers and Gen Xers during the fall season. Additionally, respondents identified lakes, fishing, and dining as attractions/activities that would entice them to extend their stay during both seasons, with water activities also identified for summer. Currently, 54 percent of respondents were aware of lakes and 33.8 percent were aware of lakeside dining. Therefore, it may be worthwhile to continue marketing the area's lakes, water activities (including fishing), and the many dining options available in Fairmont, in order to attract visitors to stay longer.

More than one-third of respondents stayed with a friend or relative, and that percentage was even higher among millennials during summer. This finding corresponds with the result that millennials were more likely than the other three generations to identify visiting family/friends as the primary reason to visit Fairmont. To encourage visitor engagement with the community, it is important local residents (i.e., visitor hosts) are aware of what the community offers in terms of restaurants, attractions, festivals/events, and recreational activities.

Gen Xers were top spenders in the Fairmont area, especially during fall. Given their income level, catering to Gen Xers' interests and travel needs will likely generate greater spending from this generation. Restaurants/bars were the second highest spending category (after lodging), which corresponds with the finding that the most frequently participated in activity was dining out. Moreover, dining out was the second most enjoyable tourism activity during both seasons and was identified as an activity that would attract visitors to stay longer. Clearly, Fairmont has a good base of dining options, but opportunities may exist to add new ones to entice more visitors.

Shopping was the second-most frequently participated in activity (33.8 percent), and 38.6 percent of respondents were aware of shopping opportunities in Fairmont. Additionally, more than eight percent of respondents enjoyed shopping during both seasons, and seven percent identified shopping as an activity that would attract them to stay longer in Fairmont during fall. This finding shows there are opportunities to further market shopping opportunities in Fairmont to increase visitor spending and length of stay.

Close to half of visitors planned their trip no more than two weeks in advance. This can be challenging for destination marketing organizations, as it is difficult and expensive to influence last-minute decisions. Furthermore, visitors were most likely to receive word-of-mouth travel information. Therefore, high-quality customer service is very important, given positive in-person experiences tend to translate into positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Google/Internet search was the second most frequently used information source. Clearly, it is important for tourism businesses to maintain an online presence and to ensure they are located accurately on digital maps.

Lastly, while 38 percent of respondents planned to share trip information on Facebook, only 7.8 percent used Facebook as an information source. This finding suggests Facebook can be regarded as a tool to increase electronic word of mouth. Local businesses can encourage visitors to tag the business's Facebook page (assuming it has one) when sharing their experiences. This way, the visitor's Facebook friends will see the business's Facebook page and create electronic word of mouth.

INTRODUCTION

Consumer profile information is essential for successful tourism marketing and planning. Visit Fairmont—the city's convention and visitor bureau—collaborated with various entities to fund a visitor profile during summer and fall 2018. This report presents the methods and findings for both seasons (June – November, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Trained staff administered on-site, in-person questionnaires to Fairmont area visitors during summer and fall 2018, specifically between June 1 and November 30, 2018.

Study setting

Fairmont, with an estimated 2017 population of 10,126 residents, is located in southern Minnesota (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). With a chain of five lakes and 29 city parks featuring an extensive disc golf complex, Fairmont offers a wide range of outdoor recreational opportunities. Historic and cultural sites such as the Fairmont Opera House and Heritage Acres, as well as local orchards offer space to host a variety of cultural events and seasonal festivals. As a prime hospitality exit on I-90, Fairmont is a popular stopover site for Interstate travelers in southern Minnesota.

Sampling

A convenience sample was designed to reach the breadth of visitors to the Fairmont area. Data collection took place on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and a small number of weekdays throughout the summer and fall seasons.

Visit Fairmont was consulted to provide specific sampling sites (e.g., attractions, lodging facilities, restaurants) and subsequently made initial contact with site management to request their willingness to participate. Throughout Fairmont, questionnaires were collected at a total of 23 sites and festivals/events during summer and 18 sites and festivals/events during fall. All questionnaires were administered in person by surveyors hired and trained by the University of Minnesota Tourism Center.

Approaching and screening respondents

Three screening questions ensured each survey respondent was an adult visitor (Figure 1). For the purpose of this study, a visitor was anyone who traveled at least 50 miles from their primary residence to the area or stayed at least one night in Fairmont away from home. As an incentive, respondents were included in a quarterly drawing to win a $100 gift certificate.

1. Are you 18 years old or older? ❑ Yes (Continue) ❑ No (Ask if an adult is present; if no, terminate)
2. Do you live 50 miles or more from the Fairmont area? ❑ Yes (Eligible to complete survey) ❑ No (Ask question 3)
3. Did you or do you plan to stay at least one night away from home in Fairmont area?
   ❑ Yes (Eligible to complete survey) ❑ No (Thank/terminate)

Fig. 1: Screening questions for potential respondents to the 2018 Fairmont area visitor survey

Questionnaire

An on-site questionnaire was developed based on past research and with the assistance of Visit Fairmont. Questionnaire sections included trip motivation, spending, activities, accommodations, transportation, group composition, planning and information sources, and basic demographics (Appendix A).

Response rate

Throughout the summer and fall quarters of data collection, surveyors obtained a total of 739 questionnaires from eligible visitors. A quarter of visitors were contacted in August, 21 percent in October, 17 percent in September, 15 percent in July, 12 percent in June, and 11 percent in November (Figure 2). More than 30 percent of respondents (31.5 percent) were contacted on Saturdays, 22.8 percent on Fridays, 19.4 percent on Sundays, and 16.6 percent on Wednesdays (Figure 3). Forty-five percent of respondents were contacted at lodging facilities, 30.2 percent at restaurants, and 11.2 percent at festivals/events (Figure 4).

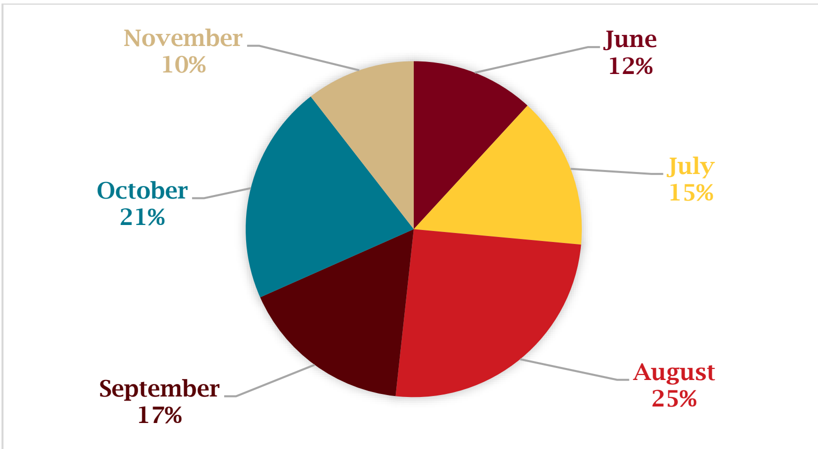

Fig. 2: Month respondents completed Fairmont area visitor survey (n=739)

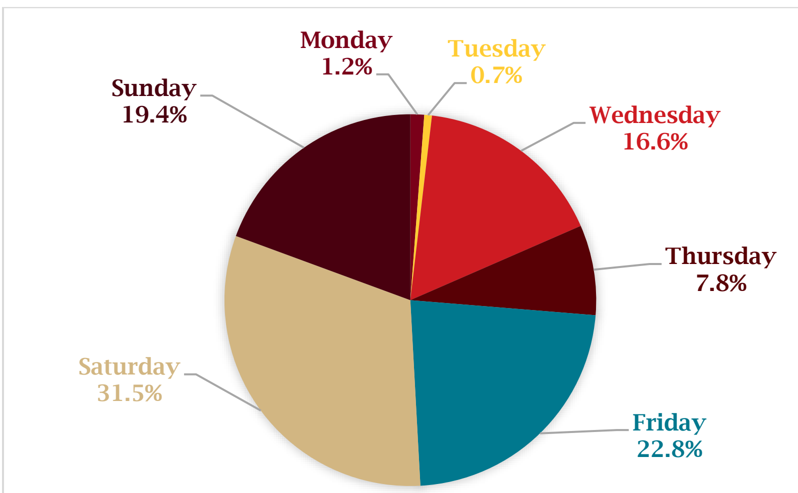

Fig. 3: Day of the week respondents completed Fairmont area visitor survey (n=739)

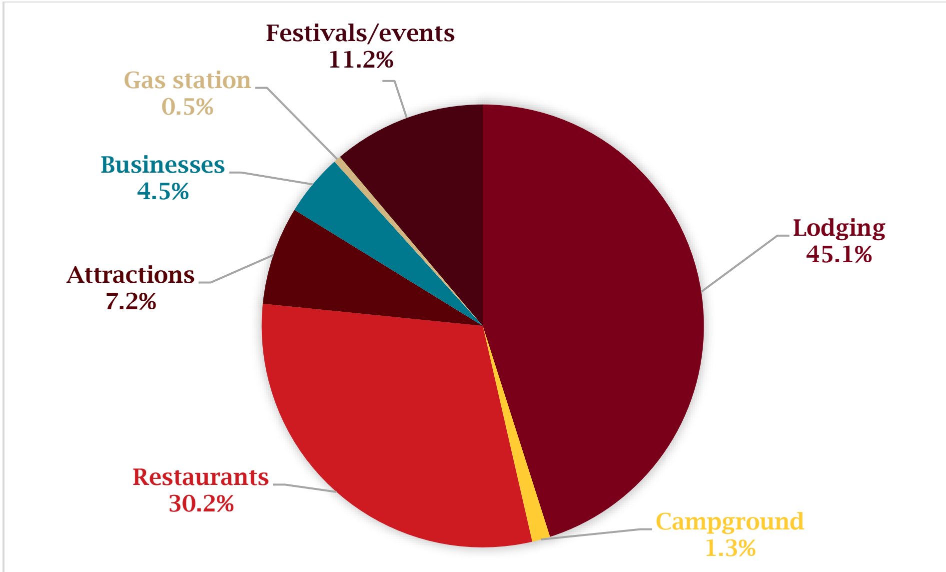

Fig. 4: Location where respondents completed Fairmont area visitor survey (n=739)

Analysis

Completed questionnaires were entered, cleaned, and checked in SPSS (version 24.0), a social science statistical analysis software. Analysis provided frequencies, means, medians, and standard deviations to describe the sample and provide information on variables of interest. A trade area analysis was conducted to create a customized trade area based on visitors' primary residence.

RESULTS

Respondents

Demographics

More than half (55.6 percent) of respondents were female (Figure 5). The average age of respondents was 50 years old (M=50.35, Mdn=52, SD=16.26[1]). More than 40 percent of respondents (41.7 percent) were between 54 and 72 years old (commonly known as baby boomers), and 27.3 percent were between 37 and 53 years old (commonly known as Generation X; Figure 6). Close to a quarter (24.2 percent) were between 19 and 36 years old (commonly known as millennials).

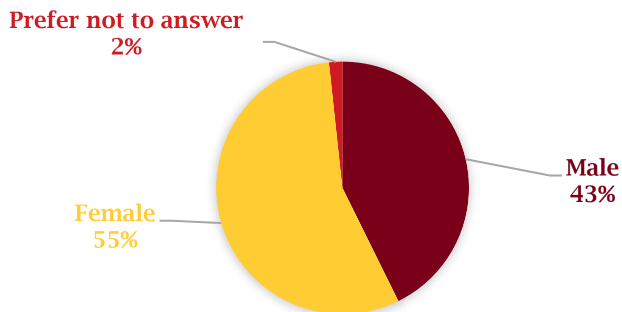

Fig 5: Gender of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=579)

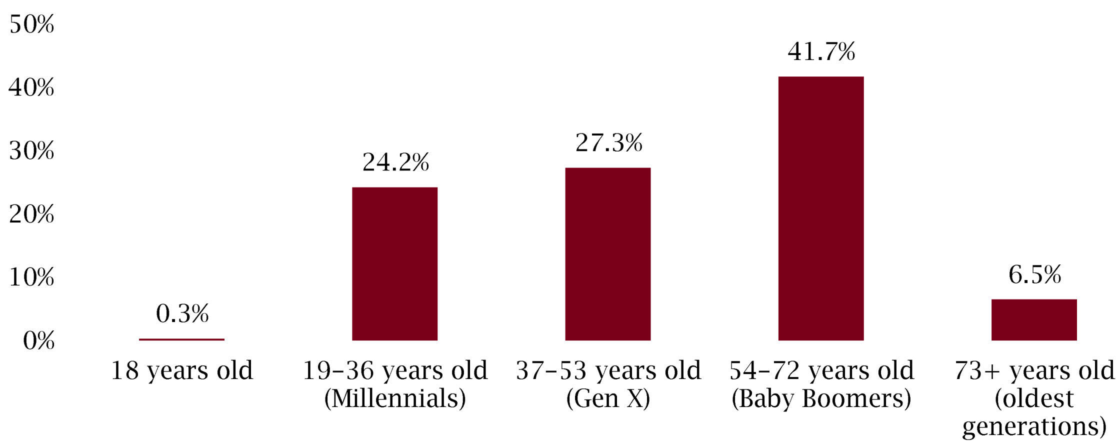

Fig. 6: Percentage of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents in various age brackets (n=587)

The household income of 21.2 percent of respondents was in the \$50,001–\$75,000 range, followed by 18.1 percent in the \$75,001–\$100,000 range, 14.8 percent in the \$25,001–\$50,000 range, and 14.0 percent in the \$175,000+ range (Figure 7).

[1] M=mean, Mdn=Median, SD=Standard Deviation

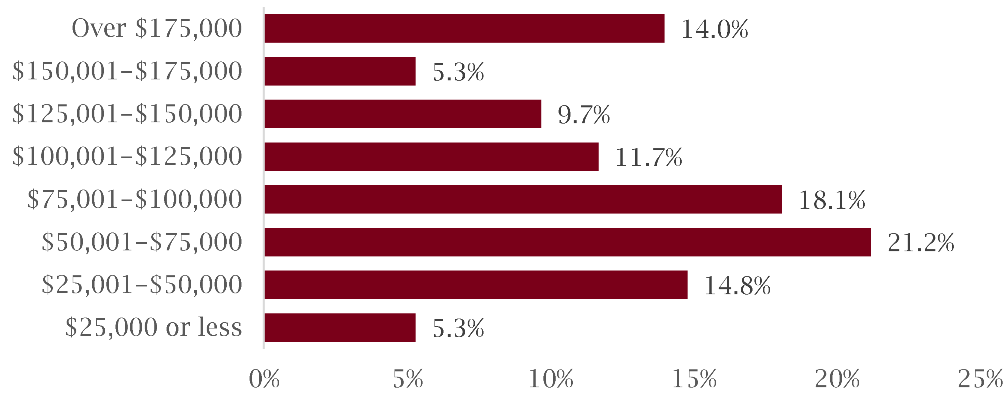

Fig. 7: Percentage of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents in pre-tax income groups (n=514)

Millennials most often fell within the $50,001–$100,000 income range during summer and the $50,000 or less income range during fall (Figure 8). Both Gen Xers and baby boomers most often fell within the $100,000+ income range during both seasons. The oldest generations most often fell within the $50,001–$100,000 income range during both seasons.

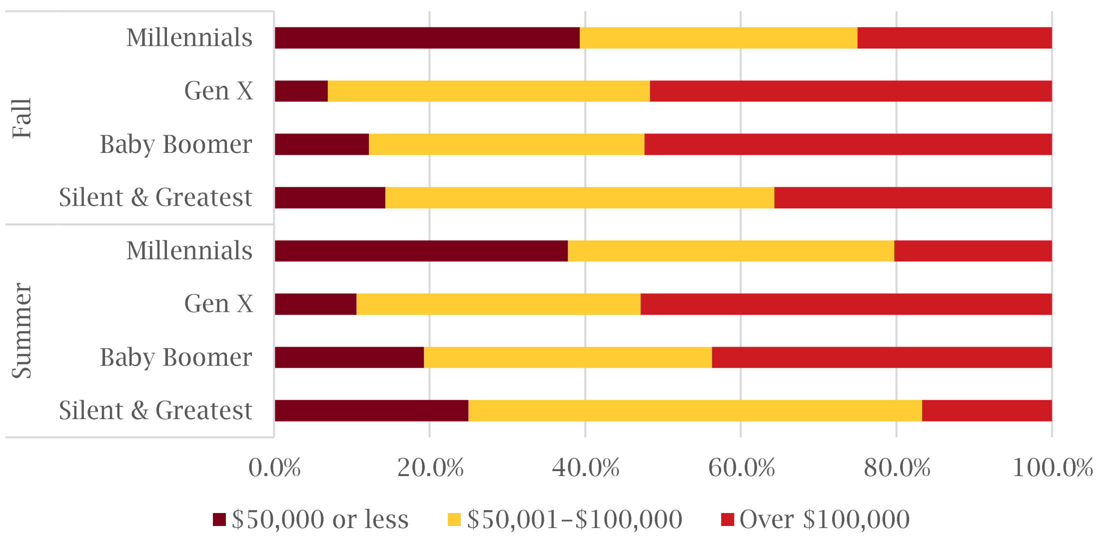

Fig. 8: Percentage of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents in pre-tax income groups, season by generation (n=514)

In terms of educational level, 30.1 percent of respondents had a bachelor's degree, 23.7 percent had post-graduate or professional school education, and another 18.7 percent had some college education (Figure 9).

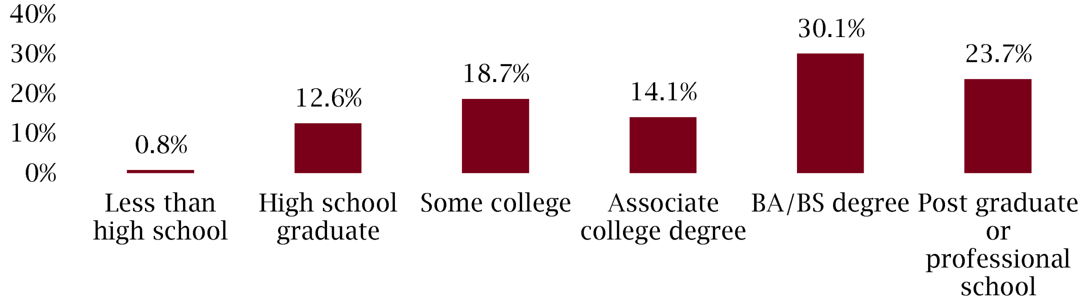

Fig. 9: Educational level of respondents to Fairmont area visitor survey (n=604)

Primary residence

During both summer and fall, respondents' top five originating states were Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Illinois (Table 1). During summer, 47.7 percent of respondents came from Minnesota and 32.0 percent did during fall. In terms of respondents' top five originating counties, Hennepin, Blue Earth, Dakota, and Faribault were reported often during both seasons. During summer, 7.8 percent came from Hennepin County and 2.9 percent did during fall. Regarding the top five Core Based Statistical Areas (CBSA), Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, MN–WI, Mankato–North Mankato, MN, Sioux Falls, SD, and Chicago–Naperville–Elgin, IL–IN–WI were mentioned for both seasons. During summer, 18.1 percent of respondents came from Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, MN–WI and 12.6 percent did during fall.

Table 1: Primary place of residence of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=594)

Top five states			
Summer	**Percent of respondents**	**Fall**	**Percent of respondents**
Minnesota	47.7	Minnesota	32.0
Iowa	13.4	Iowa	11.7
Wisconsin	5.7	Wisconsin	5.4
South Dakota	5.4	South Dakota	5.1
Illinois	3.3	Illinois	3.1
Top five counties			
Summer	**Percent of respondents**	**Fall**	**Percent of respondents**
Hennepin	7.8	Faribault	3.1
Blue Earth	3.9	Hennepin	2.9
Kossuth (IA)	3.6	Minnehaha (SD)	2.6
Dakota	3.6	Blu Earth	2.3
Faribault	3.0	Dakota	2.0
Top five Core Based Statistical Areas			
Summer	**Percent of respondents**	**Fall**	**Percent of respondents**
Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, MN–WI	18.1	Minneapolis–St. Paul–Bloomington, MN–WI	12.6
Mankato–North Mankato, MN	4.8	Mankato–North Mankato, MN	2.9
Rochester, MN	2.7	Sioux Falls, SD	2.6
Sioux Falls, SD	2.7	Chicago–Naperville–Elgin, IL–IN–WI	2.3
Chicago–Naperville–Elgin, IL–IN–WI	2.4	Worthington, MN	1.4

Figures 10 and 11 represents the distribution of U.S. respondents at three set (25 percent, 50 percent, and 75 percent) distances from Fairmont for the summer and fall seasons. Each dot represents a unique ZIP code and may indicate one or more respondents from that ZIP code area.

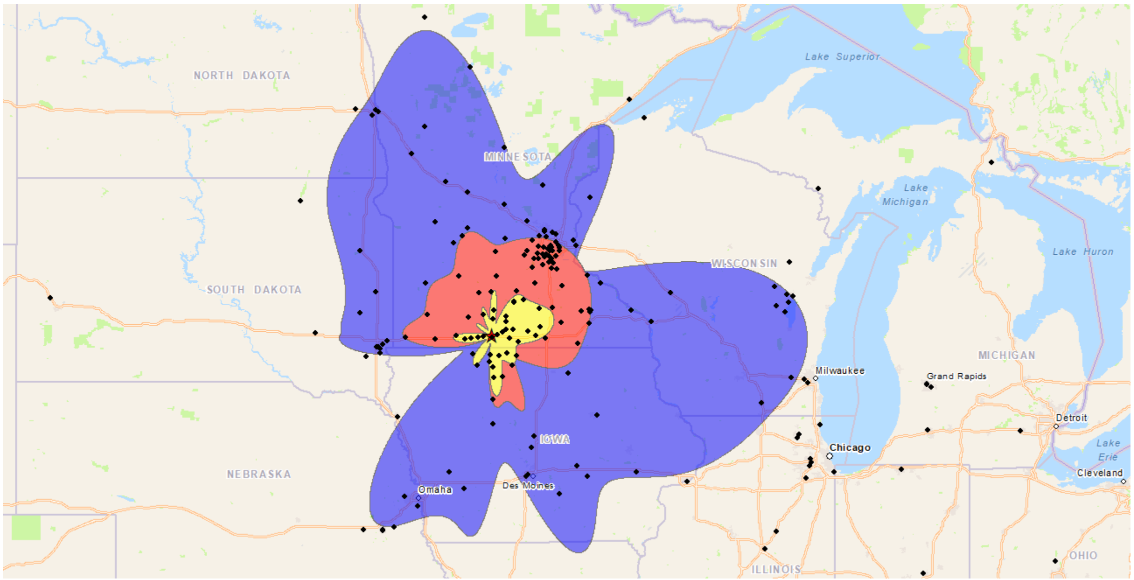

Fig. 10: Scatter plot of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (living in the U.S. only), summer season (n=331)

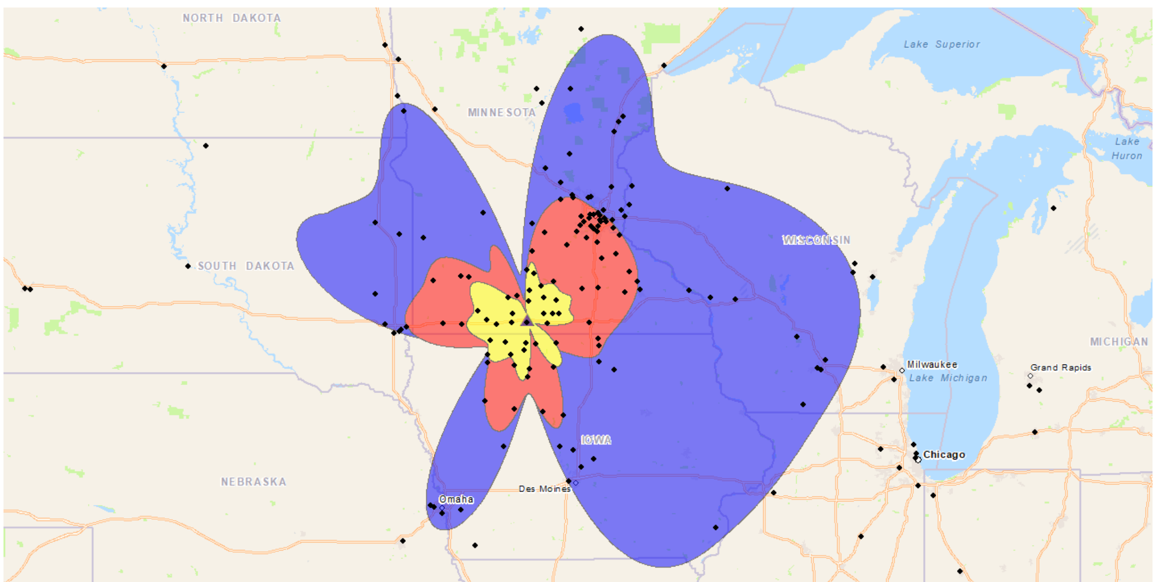

Fig. 11: Scatter plot of Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (living in the U.S. only), fall season (n=263)

Past visitation

Respondents made an average of 4.8 visits to the Fairmont area during the past 12 months and an average of 12.8 visits during the past five years (Table 2). Specifically, 24.6 percent of respondents made one visit to the Fairmont area during the past 12 months, while 18.8 percent made between three and five visits (Figure 12). During the past five years, 18 percent of visitors made three to five visits to the Fairmont area, and 17.3 percent had not visited Fairmont (Figure 13).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of past visitation by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents

	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Number of visits in past 12 months (n=586)	4.79	2	7.75
Number of visits in past 5 years (n=423)	12.8	3	27.51

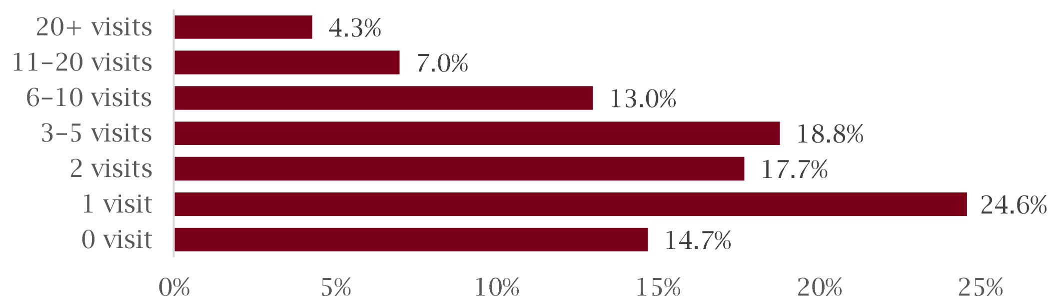

Fig. 12: Number of visits in the past 12 months by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=586)

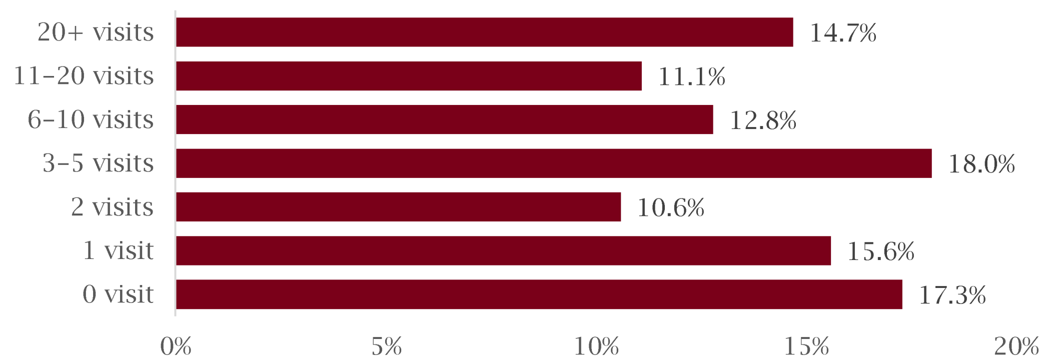

Fig. 13: Number of visits in the past five years by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=423)

Trip information

Primary destination

The Fairmont area was the primary destination for 69 percent of respondents (Figure 14).

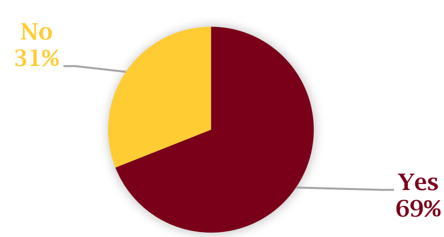

Fig. 14: Whether the Fairmont area was survey respondents' primary destination (n=729)

Among respondents whose final destination was not Fairmont, South Dakota was the most frequently identified during both seasons (Table 3). Five other destinations were also identified during both seasons: Blue Earth, Iowa, Minneapolis, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Table 3: Final destinations identified by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=196)

Final destination			
Summer (n=87)	**Percentage of respondents**	**Fall (n=109)**	**Percentage of respondents**
South Dakota	14.9%	South Dakota	14.7%
Blue Earth, MN	6.9%	Iowa	7.3%
Indiana	4.6%	Twin Cities-1/Minneapolis-5/St. Paul-1	6.4%
Sherburne	4.6%	Wisconsin	5.5%
California	3.4%	Illinois	4.6%
Iowa	3.4%	Blue Earth, MN	3.7%
Minneapolis	3.4%	Wyoming	3.7%
Truman, MN	3.4%	Mankato, MN	2.8%
Wisconsin	3.4%	North Dakota	2.8%
Wyoming	3.4%	Windom	2.8%

Note: only final destinations with at least three mentions are listed in this table.

Alternative destination

Respondents identified a variety of alternative destinations if they could not come to the Fairmont area for their primary trip activity. The top three for both seasons were the Twin Cities, Iowa, and Mankato (Table 4). Five other destinations were also reported during both seasons: “Lake,” Blue Earth, South Dakota, Albert Lea, and Jackson, Minnesota.

Table 4: Alternative destinations identified by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=258)

Alternative destination			
Summer (n=130)	**Percentage of respondents**	**Fall (n=128)**	**Percentage of respondents**
Twin Cities/Minneapolis	13.1%	Mankato	20.3%
Iowa	11.5%	Iowa	8.6%
Mankato	7.7%	Twin Cities-6/Minneapolis-4	7.8%
Lake/Lakes	6.9%	Worthington, MN	6.3%
Blue Earth, MN	3.8%	South Dakota	5.5%
South Dakota	3.8%	"Home"/stay home	4.7%
Albert Lea, MN	2.3%	no other option-1/nowhere-3	3.1%
California	2.3%	Albert Lea, MN	2.3%
Colorado	2.3%	Jackson, MN	2.3%
Jackson, MN	2.3%	Blue Earth, MN	2.3%
North Shore/Up north	2.3%	"Lake"	2.3%
		Wherever work asks	2.3%

Note: only alternative destinations with at least three mentions are listed in this table.

Reasons for stopping over in Fairmont

Among respondents who stopped over in Fairmont only, 28.7 percent identified “stretch my legs/tired/need a break,” 26.2 percent identified food, and 18.0 percent identified gas/fuel (Figure 15). Respondents also identified other reasons for stopping over in Fairmont. More than 50 respondents (n=54) identified lodging as their reason for stopping over.

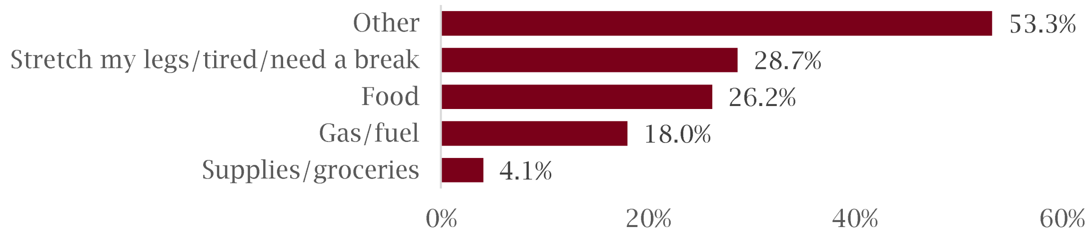

Fig. 15: Fairmont area visitor survey respondents' reasons to stop over in Fairmont (n=122)

Trip duration

On average, respondents spent 3.2 nights during their entire trip and 1.8 nights in the Fairmont area (Table 5). Specifically, 41.3 percent of respondents spent two to five nights during their entire trip, 22.5 percent spent one night, and 20.8 percent took a day trip (Figure 16). Close to one-third (32.6 percent) of respondents spent one night in the Fairmont area, 24.8 percent did not spend the night, and 23.2 percent spent two nights (Figure 17).

Table 5: Descriptive statistics of length of stay by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents

	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
Number of nights spent on the entire trip (n=688)	3.3	2	4.6
Number of nights spent in Fairmont (n=656)	1.8	1	4.4

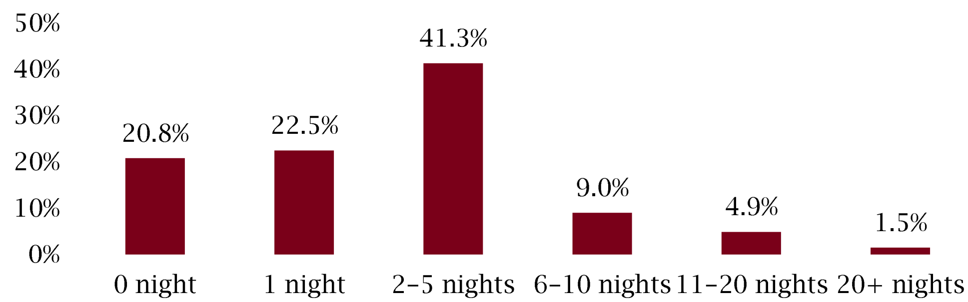

Fig. 16: Total number of nights spent on the trip by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=688).

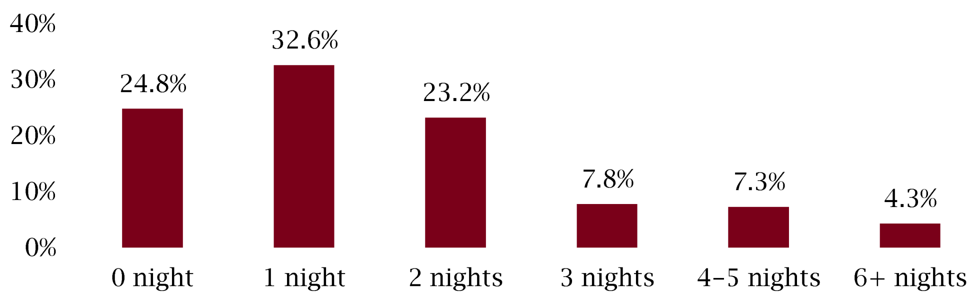

Fig. 17: Number of nights spent in Fairmont by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=656)

During both summer and fall seasons, millennials spent fewer nights on their trips compared with the other three older generations (Figure 18). The latter spent a similar number of nights on their trip during summer, while baby boomers and the oldest generations spent more nights on their trip during the fall season.

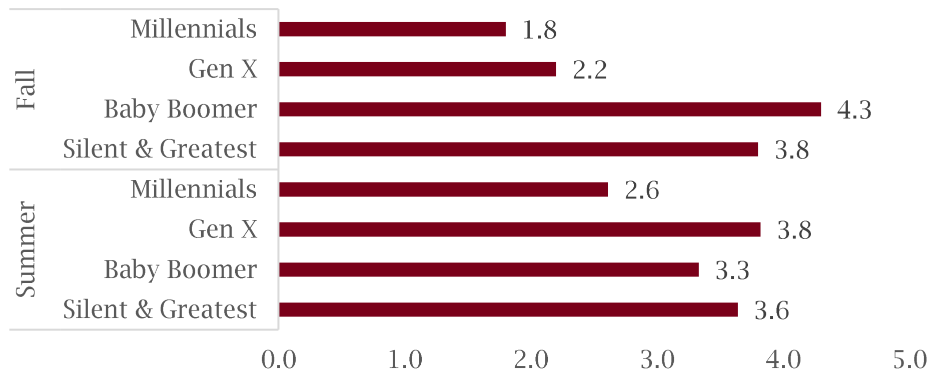

Fig. 18: Number of nights spent on the trip by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=688)

During summer, the four generations spent a similar number of nights in Fairmont (Figure 19). During fall, the oldest generations spent more nights in Fairmont and millennials spent the fewest nights.

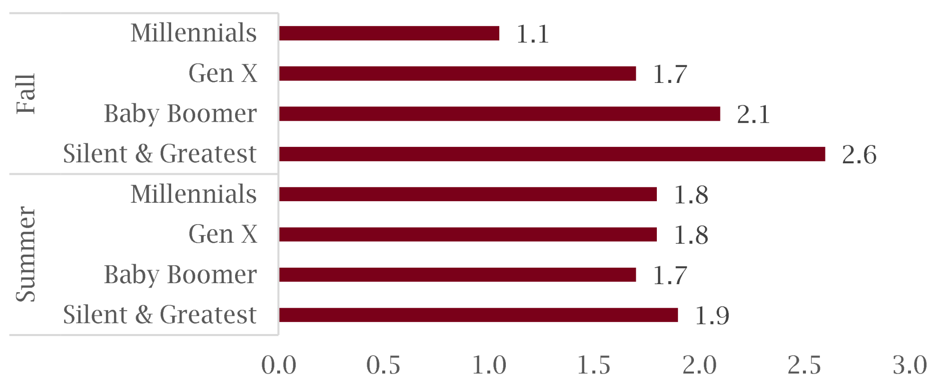

Fig. 19: Number of nights spent in Fairmont by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=656)

Lodging

Close to half of respondents (48.2 percent) stayed in a hotel or motel, the most frequently chosen lodging type (Figure 20). Morea than 30 percent of respondents (35.5 percent) stayed with a friend or relative. Five percent stayed in their own vacation home, and another five percent stayed in the vacation home of a friend or relative. Four percent used an RV as lodging, three percent used a tent, and another three percent stayed at a resort. Two percent used a vacation rental by owners, and another 1.6 percent stayed at a bed and breakfast.

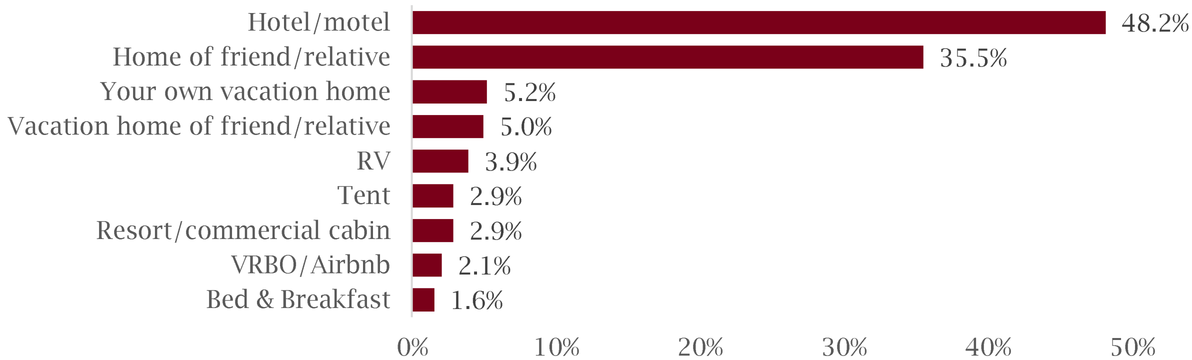

Fig. 20: Lodging type among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=739)

During both summer and fall, the percentage of respondents within each generation who stayed at a hotel or motel steadily increased from youngest (millennials) to oldest (Figure 21). Millennials and Gen Xers were somewhat more likely than baby boomers and the oldest generations to stay with a friend or relative (Figure 22).

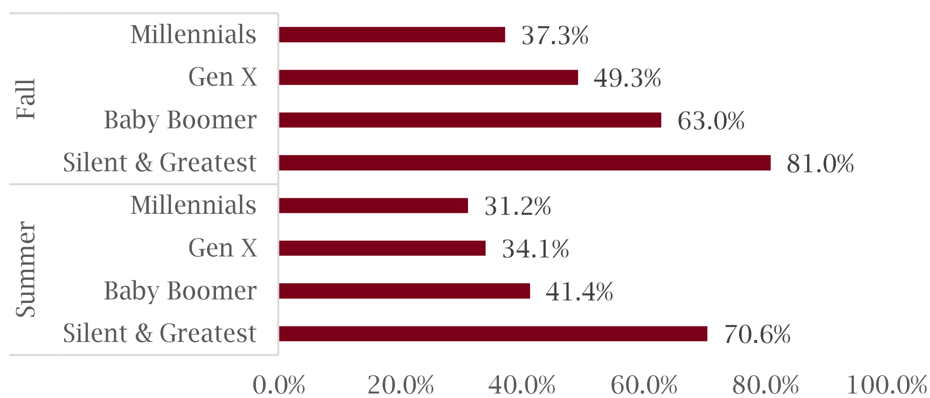

Fig. 21: Percentage of respondents staying at a hotel or motel, season by generation (n=739)

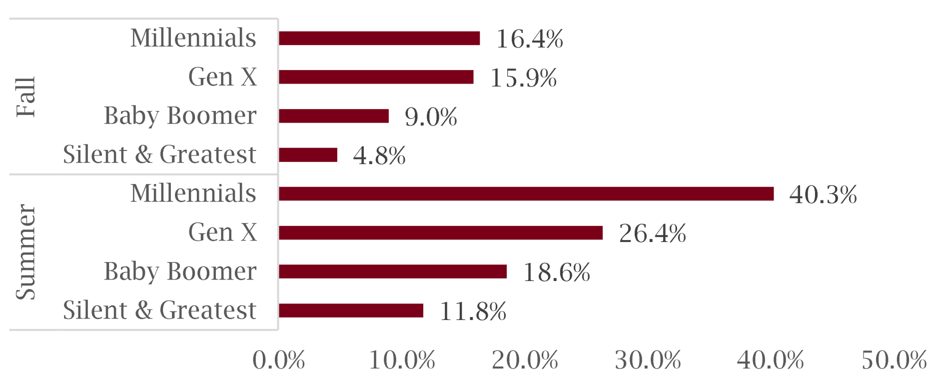

Fig. 22: Percentage of respondents staying with a friend or relative, season by generation (n=739)

Likelihood of using a lakeside campground in Fairmont

Respondents were asked how likely they would camp at a lakeside campground in Fairmont, if one were to become available. Fifty-five percent of respondents reported it would be unlikely or highly unlikely (Figure 23). Eighteen percent were unsure. Fifteen percent of respondents said it would be likely and another 11.6 percent said it would be highly likely.

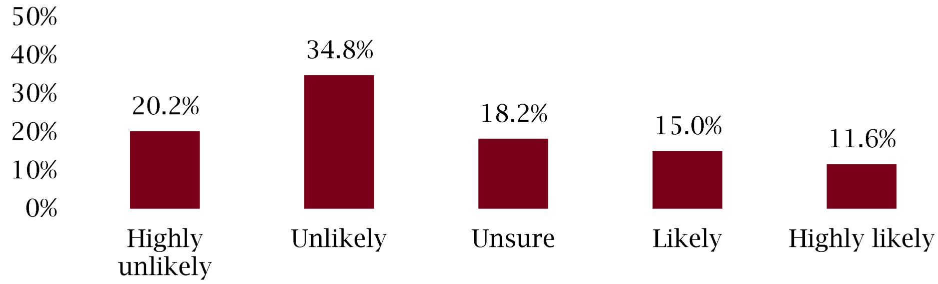

Fig. 23: Likelihood of using a lakeside campground in Fairmont if one were available (n=672)

During both summer and fall, millennials and Gen Xers were somewhat more likely than baby boomers or the oldest generations to use a lakeside campground if one were available (Figure 24). However, the overall likelihood of using a lakeside campground remained low across generations during both seasons.

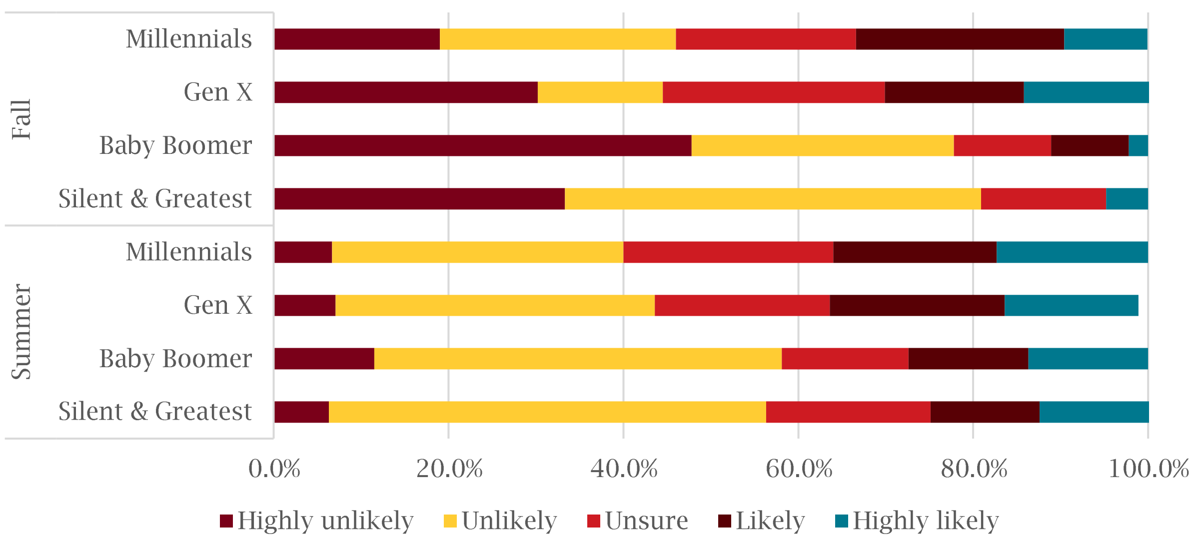

Fig. 24: Likelihood of using a lakeside campground in Fairmont if one were available, season by generation (n=672)

Awareness of amenities in Fairmont

Respondents were also asked about their awareness of various amenities available in Fairmont prior to their trip. More than half of respondents (54 percent) were aware of its lakes (Figure 25), 44.2 percent of its parks, 38.6 percent of its shopping, and 33.8 percent of its lakeside dining. Close to 30 percent of respondents were aware of golf courses (27.7 percent) and the Aquatic Park (26.1

percent). Close to a quarter were aware of historic sites (22.9 percent) and trails (22.5 percent). Nineteen percent were aware of arts/entertainment, and 13.8 percent were aware of disc golf courses.

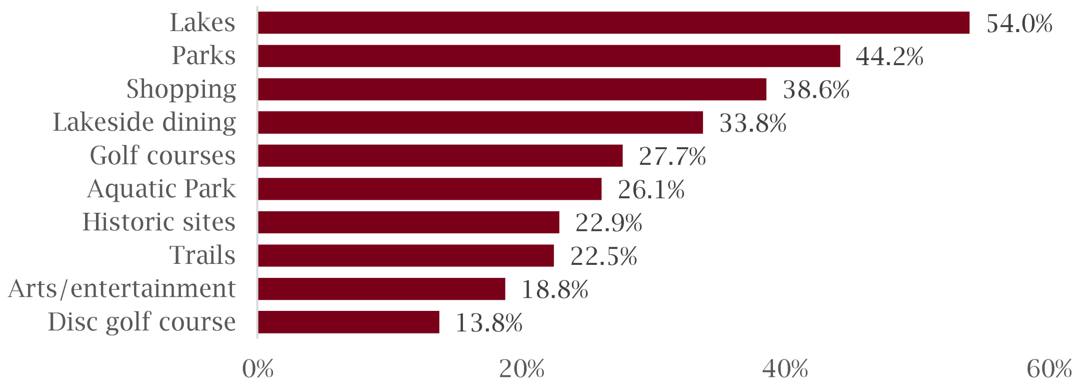

Fig. 25: Awareness of amenities in Fairmont prior to arrival (n=739)

Group composition and size

The average respondent traveled in a group of four people (*M*=3.79, *Mdn*=2, *SD*=5.84). Specifically, 36.4 percent of respondents traveled in a group of two, 18.1 percent traveled alone, and another 15.6 percent in a group of three (Figure 26). Twelve percent traveled in a group of four, 11.2 percent in a group of six or more, and 6.8 percent in a group of five.

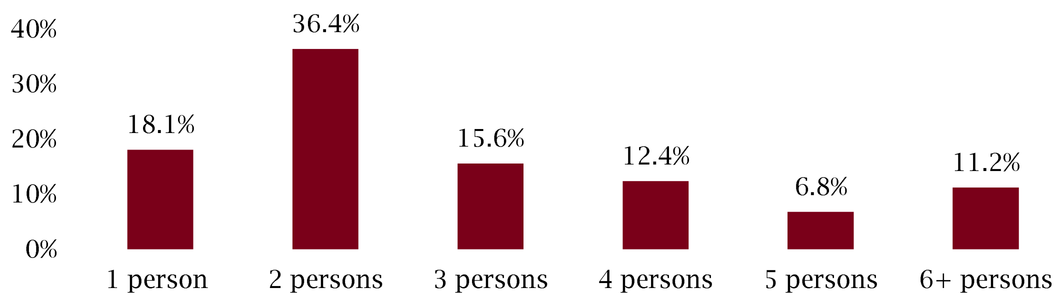

Fig. 26: Group size in which Fairmont area visitor survey respondents traveled (n=707)

During the summer season, millennials and Gen Xers traveled in somewhat larger groups compared to baby boomers and the oldest generations (Figure 27). During the fall season, however, group size across the four generations was almost identical.

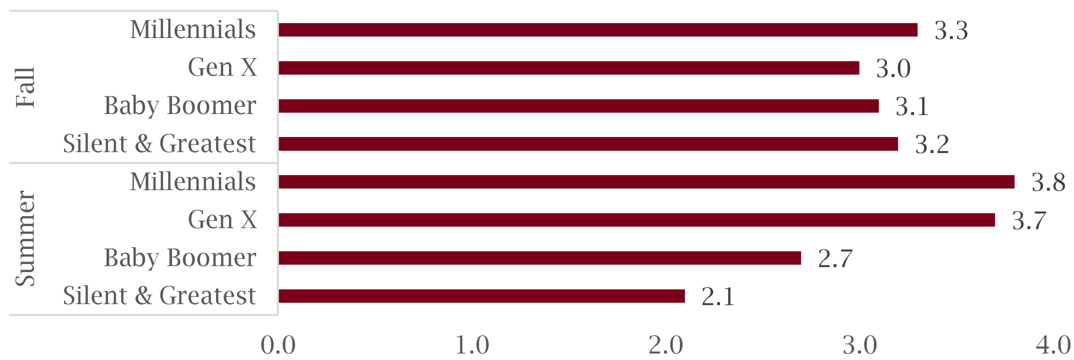

Fig. 27: Group size in which Fairmont area visitor survey respondents traveled, season by generation (n=707)

More than 40 percent of respondents (40.7 percent) traveled with family and 21.0 percent as couple or with a partner (Figure 28). Thirteen percent traveled alone, 9.4 percent with family and friends, 7.8 percent with colleagues, and 6.7 percent with friends.

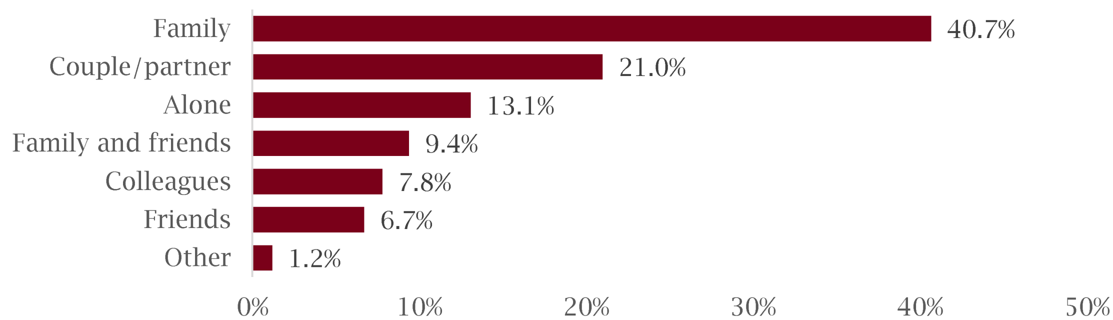

Fig. 28: Group type among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=727)

More than half of respondents (51.7 percent) traveled with adults in the 51–69 age range, 32.6 percent traveled with adults in the 36–50 age range, and 29.0 percent traveled with children under 18 (Figure 29). A quarter of respondents traveled with adults between 26 and 35 years old, 19.2 percent with adults over 70 years old, and 14.6 percent with adults between 18 and 25 years old.

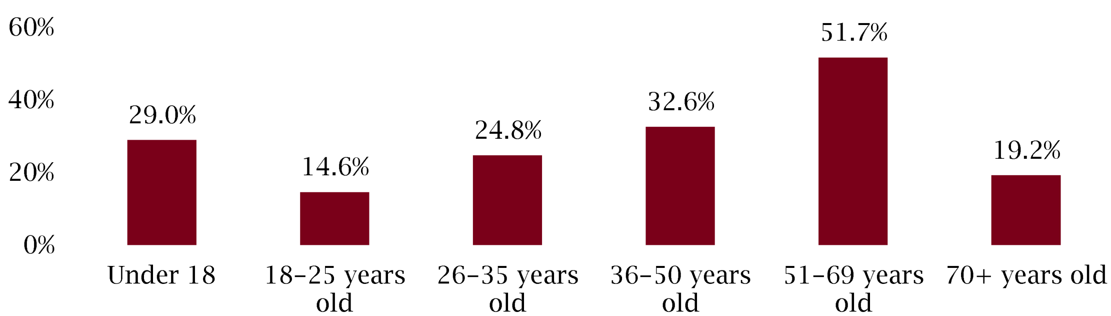

Fig. 29: Age groups included in Fairmont area visitor survey respondents' travel party (n=739)

Visitor spending

The average respondent spent the most on lodging, followed by restaurants/bars, transportation, groceries, and shopping (Table 6). It is worth noting that, for every spending category, the mean was much higher than the median. The standard deviation was also large. This finding indicates the range of spending in each category was wide, and a few respondents spent a lot more than others in each category.

Table 6: Descriptive statistics of daily personal spending in various categories by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=535)

	Mean (dollars)	Median (dollars)	Standard Deviation (dollars)
Lodging	47.5	0.0	70.4
Restaurants/bars	23.6	15.0	32.7
Transportation	13.5	0.0	34.6
Groceries	7.5	0.0	31.2
Shopping	7.0	0.0	31.3
Entertainment/attractions	4.0	0.0	16.9
Misc.	2.5	0.0	35.5
Indoor recreation	1.5	0.0	32.5
Outdoor recreation	1.4	0.0	7.7
Total	108.5	70.0	139.9

During both seasons, spending by millennials was somewhat lower than the other three generations. During summer, personal daily spending across the three older generations was somewhat similar (Figure 30). During fall, Gen Xers spent more per person per day compared to the other two older generations.

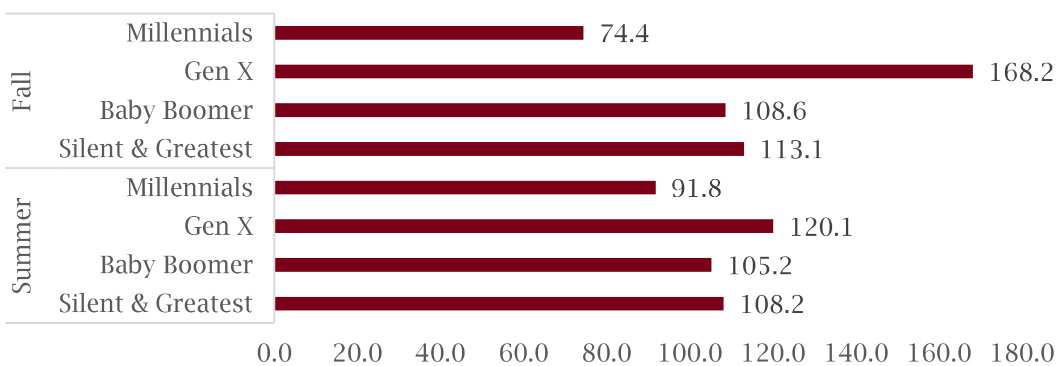

Fig. 30: Average personal daily spending by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=535)

Trip activities

Respondents participated in a variety of activities during their trip to the Fairmont area (Figure 31). The most frequent activity was dining out (78.5 percent), followed distantly by shopping (33.8

percent) and visiting friends/relatives (25.6 percent). Eighteen percent of respondents visited parks, 15.6 percent participated in sightseeing, and another 15.6 percent attended festivals/events.

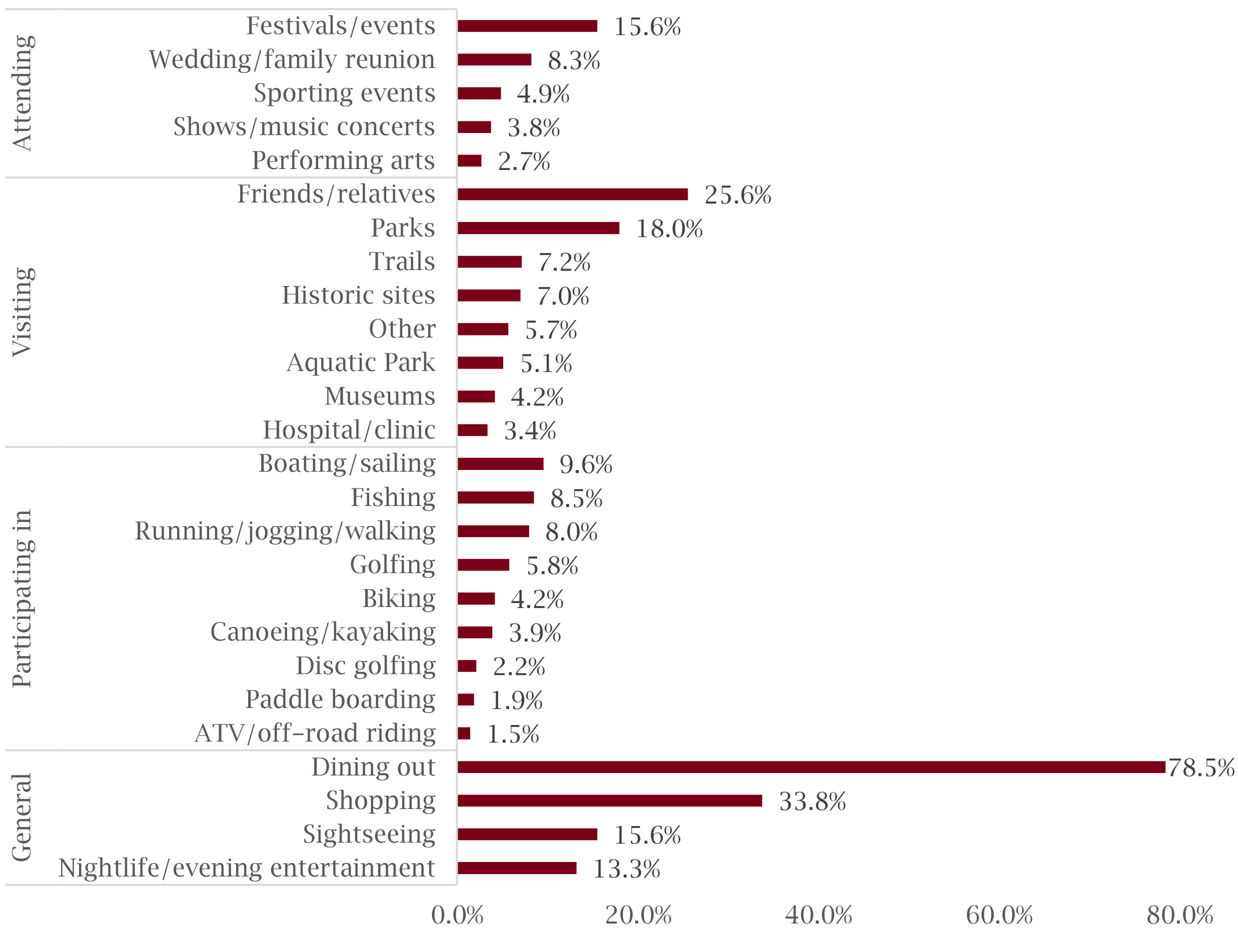

Fig. 31: Activities participated in among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=739)

Across the four generations, the percentage of respondents dining out, shopping, visiting friends/relatives, visiting parks, and sightseeing was similar during both summer and fall (Table 7). Millennials, however, were more likely to attend festivals/events during summer than the other three generations.

Table 7: The six most frequently participated in activities among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=739)

		Dining out	Shopping	Visit friends / relatives	Visit parks	Sightseeing	Attemd festival / event
Summer	Millennials	76.6%	42.9%	37.7%	24.7%	14.3%	32.5%
	Gen X	76.9%	42.9%	27.5%	25.3%	19.8%	23.1%
	Baby Boomer	76.6%	33.8%	29.0%	15.9%	17.9%	15.2%
	Silent & Greatest	76.5%	41.2%	29.4%	35.3%	11.8%	5.9%
Fall	Millennials	77.6%	26.9%	19.4%	22.4%	11.9%	16.4%
	Gen X	87.0%	37.7%	27.5%	24.6%	20.3%	13.0%
	Baby Boomer	86.0%	31.0%	20.0%	11.0%	14.0%	10.0%
	Silent & Greatest	90.5%	42.9%	38.1%	19.0%	9.5%	4.8%

Respondents identified a large number of favorite tourism activities or amenities they enjoyed while visiting Fairmont (Table 8). They reported that lakes and dining out/restaurants were the most enjoyable during both seasons. Parks, shopping, and the Aquatic Park were also enjoyed by visitors during both seasons. During summer, visitors also enjoyed the county fair, boating, visiting family/relatives, fishing, golfing, and the opera house. During fall, visitors also enjoyed the Center Creek Orchard and lake activities. Six percent of fall visitors indicated they did not have time to explore, as they were on a work trip.

Table 8: Visitor survey respondents' favorite tourism activities in Fairmont area (n=419)

Favorite tourism activities			
Summer (n=246)	Percentage of respondents	Fall (n=173)	Percentage of respondents
Lakes/water-3	33.3%	Lakes	27.2%
Dining out/Restaurants/Jake's Pizza-7/Channel Inn-5	15.0%	Dining out/restaurants/Bean Town-1/Green Mill-5/Channel Inn-2/El Agave-3/Jakes-7/Marina Lodge-3	25.4%
County Fair	12.2%	Parks	12.7%
Parks	11.8%	Center Creek Orchard/apple orchard-3	11.6%
Boating	9.8%	Shopping/mall-2/thrift store-2	9.2%
Family/relatives	8.5%	Aquatic Park	6.4%
Shopping/Antique stores-2/mall-2/thrift store-1	8.5%	Here to work, no time to explore	5.8%
Aquatic Park-14 / Swimming/pools-3	8.1%	Lake activities/boating-3/kayak-1/water skiing-1/paddle boat-1	4.6%
Fishing	7.7%		
Golfing	7.7%		
Opera House/Plays-1	4.9%		

Note: Only activities mentioned by at least five percent of respondents who answered the question are listed in this table.

Respondents also mentioned a variety of tourism activities or attractions that would attract them to stay longer in Fairmont (Table 9). During both seasons, respondents identified lakes, fishing, and dining. During the summer season, respondents also mentioned campground/camping, golfing, and water activities. During the fall season, respondents also mentioned music/music event, shopping, festivals, and historic sites. Twelve percent of fall season respondents indicated they were not sure or did not know.

Table 9: Tourism activities or attractions that would attract visitors to stay longer in Fairmont (n=229)

Tourism activities or attractions			
Summer (n=121)	Percentage of respondents	Fall (n=108)	Percentage of respondents
Lakes	14.9%	Lakes/tour boat-1	13.0%
Campground/camping	9.9%	Music/music event-2/concerts-5	13.0%
Fishing	7.4%	I don't know/not sure/none	12.0%
Dining/food/restaurants (better restaurants-2)	6.6%	Dining/Channel Inn-1/more restaurants-1/craft beer-2/more food options-3	11.1%
Golfing/mini golf-2/par 3 golf course-1	6.6%	Shopping/more shopping-4	7.4%
Lake/water activities	5.8%	Festivals/fall festival-1/fair-1/county fair-1	5.6%
		Fishing/fishing tournament-1/guided fishing-1	5.6%
		Historic sites/museum-1	4.6%

Note: Only activities or attractions mentioned by at least five percent of respondents who answered the question are listed in this table.

Trip purpose and planning

Primary reason for making trip

Respondents most frequently identified visiting family/friends (26.5 percent) as the primary reason to make the trip, followed by stopping over/passing through (16.9 percent) and business/work (13.3 percent; Figure 32). Ten percent identified "other" reasons, and eight percent identified festival/event.

Among those who identified work as the primary trip reason, three summer season respondents identified "wind farm" and another two wrote down "railroad". In the fall season, five respondents wrote down "energy" or "sustainable energy" and another five identified agriculture, crop, farm or hog. Construction, "Ethanol", and "medical" were each identified by three respondents.

Among those who visited Fairmont to attend festivals or events, 25 summer season respondents identified the County Fair, and 11 fall season respondents identified apple orchard or Center Creek Orchard. Seven summer season respondents and 11 fall season respondents wrote down class reunion or reunion.

Among those who took the trip for "other" reasons, 14 summer season respondents and 16 fall season respondents identified "food" or "eating." Three fall season respondents wrote down "get away" or "vacation."

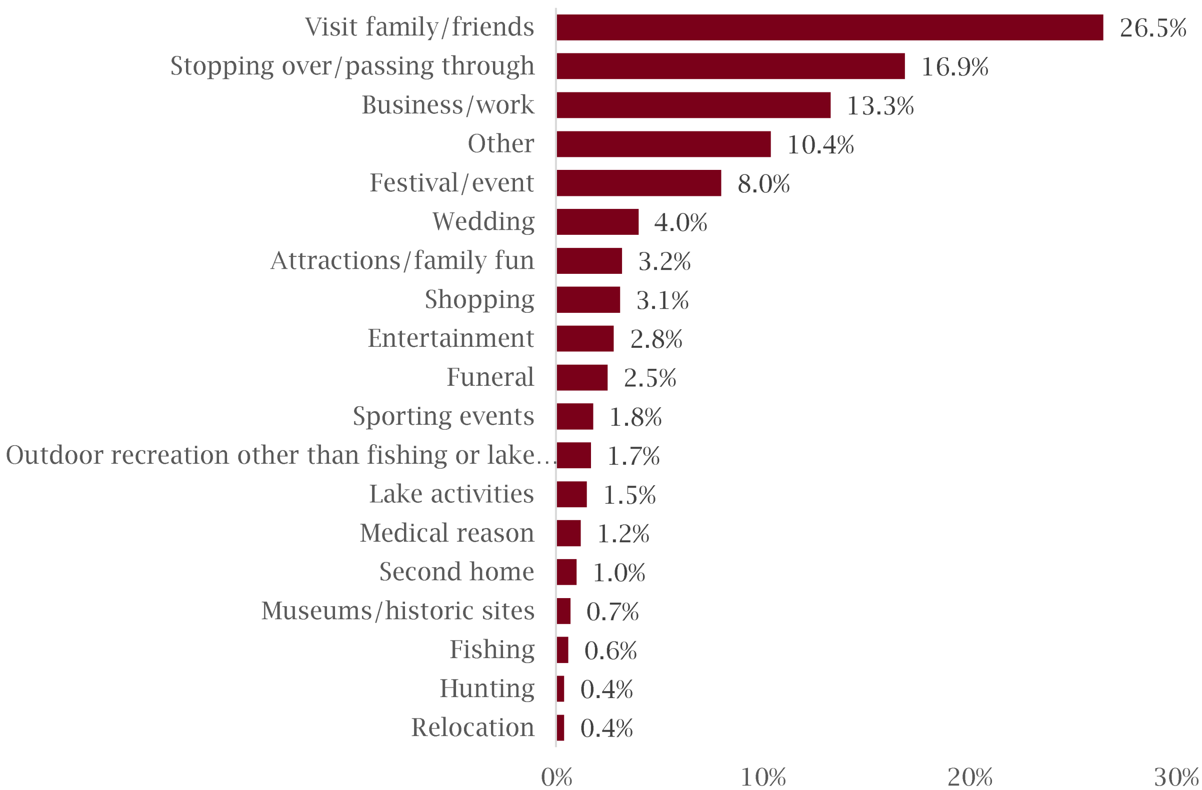

Fig. 32: Primary reason for making the trip among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=721)

During summer, millennials were more likely than the other three generations to identify visiting family/friends as their primary reason for visiting Fairmont (Table 10). Gen Xers were more likely than the other three generations to visit Fairmont for business/work. Baby boomers, compared with the other three generations, were more likely to visit Fairmont for 'other' reasons. The oldest generations were more likely to identify stopping over/passing through or attending a festival/event as their primary reason for visiting Fairmont.

During fall, millennials were more likely than the other three generations to visit Fairmont to attend festivals/events. Gen Xers were more likely to identify business/work as their primary reason for visiting Fairmont. Compared to the other three generations, baby boomers were more likely to identify visiting family/friends or stopping over/passing through as their primary reason for visiting Fairmont. The oldest generations were more likely than the other three generations to visit Fairmont for "other" reasons.

Table 10: Top five reasons for making the trip among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=721)

		Visit family / friends	Stopping over/passing through	Business/ work	Other	Festival / event
Summer	Millennials	41.1%	5.5%	9.6%	1.4%	13.7%
	Gen X	26.1%	11.4%	14.8%	4.5%	11.4%
	Baby Boomer	32.4%	14.4%	5.0%	15.1%	9.4%
	Silent & Greatest	35.3%	17.6%	5.9%	11.8%	17.6%
Fall	Millennials	23.4%	10.9%	15.6%	14.1%	7.8%
	Gen X	18.8%	14.5%	24.6%	10.1%	4.3%
	Baby Boomer	24.0%	31.0%	11.0%	2.0%	2.0%
	Silent & Greatest	19.0%	4.8%	9.5%	47.6%	4.8%

Trip planning behavior

More than 30 percent of respondents (33.6 percent) planned their trip less than one week in advance, 19.3 percent two to four weeks in advance, and 14.7 percent one to two weeks in advance (Figure 33). Twelve percent planned their trip five to eight weeks in advance, 11.5 percent more than 13 weeks in advance, and another 9.1 percent nine to 13 weeks in advance.

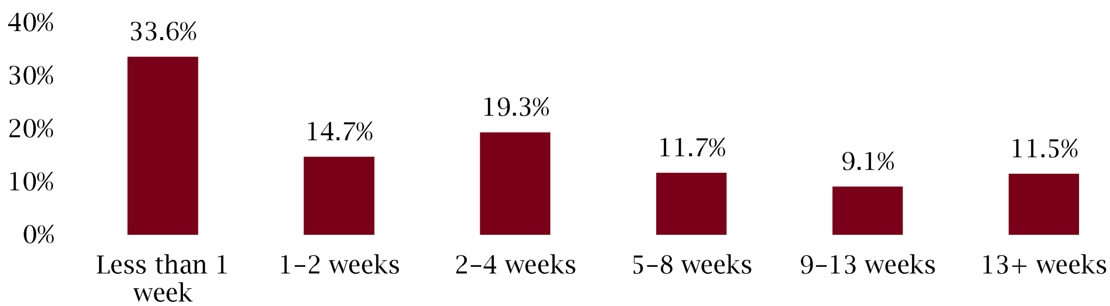

Fig. 33: Trip planning timeframe among Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=607)

In terms of information sources used to plan for their trip, respondents most frequently used word of mouth (24.8 percent) and Google/Internet search (16.5 percent; Figure 34). Twelve percent used "other" information sources, 11.6 percent used destination website, and 7.8 percent used Facebook. None of the other information sources were used by more than four percent of respondents.

In terms of "other" information sources, 11 summer season respondents used their past experience traveling to Fairmont as an information source, and ten claimed they were former Fairmont residents or grew up in the area. During the fall season, 13 respondents identified work or a corporate travel site as their main information source, and ten used their past experience traveling to Fairmont.

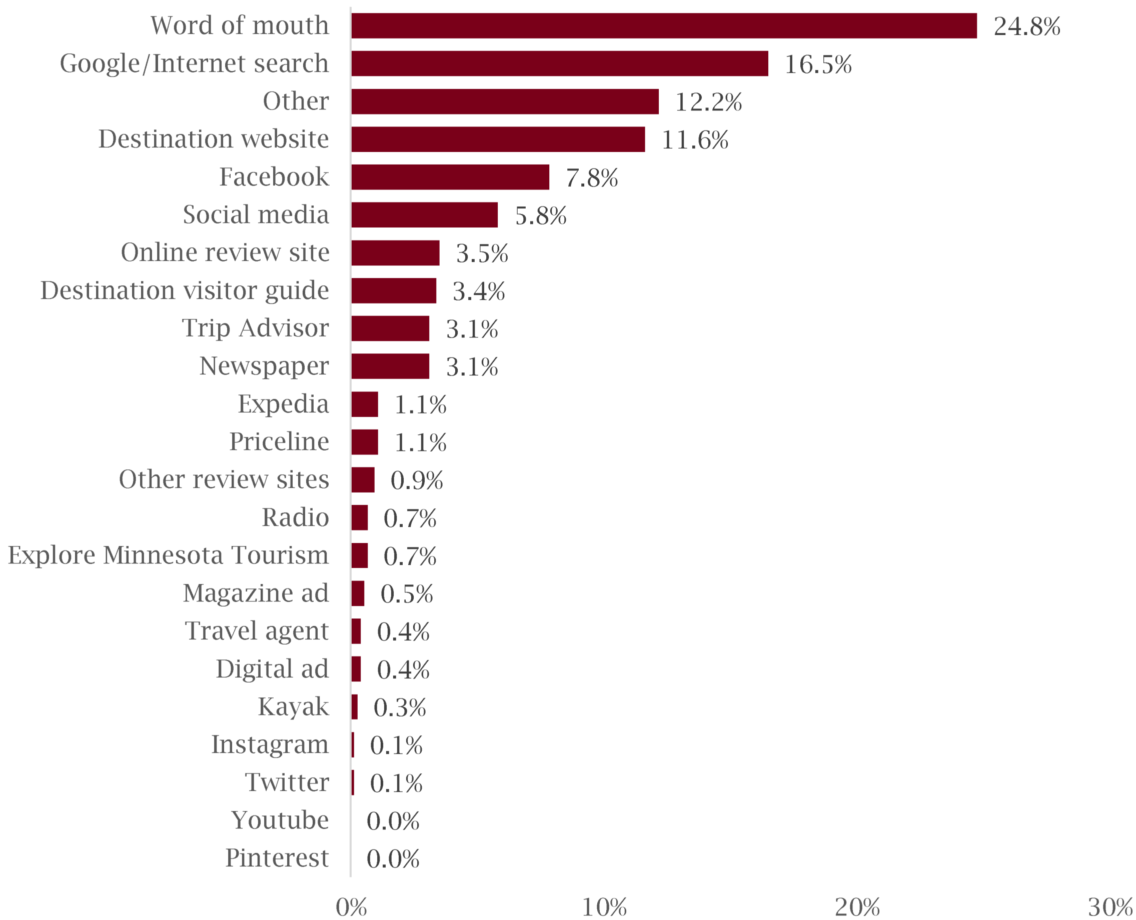

Fig. 34: Information sources used by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=739)

During summer, millennials were more likely than the other three generations to use word of mouth and Facebook as information sources (Table 11). Compared to the other three generations, Gen Xers were more likely to use "other" information sources. The oldest generations were more likely than the other three to use Google/Internet search and destination website as information sources.

During fall, millennials were more likely to use word of mouth as an information source than the other three generations. Baby boomers were more likely to use "other" information sources and Gen Xers more likely to use a Google/Internet search. Baby boomers were also less likely than the other three generations to use Facebook as an information source.

Table 11: Top five Information sources used by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents, season by generation (n=739)

		Word of mouth	Google / Internet search	Other	Destination website	Facebook
Summer	Millennials	49.4%	13.0%	6.5%	6.5%	18.2%
	Gen X	33.0%	15.4%	18.7%	7.7%	8.8%
	Baby Boomer	31.7%	11.7%	13.8%	19.3%	6.9%
	Silent & Greatest	23.5%	23.8%	5.9%	23.5%	0.0%
Fall	Millennials	28.4%	32.8%	14.9%	6.0%	13.4%
	Gen X	21.7%	37.7%	13.0%	13.0%	13.0%
	Baby Boomer	20.0%	18.0%	21.0%	16.0%	3.0%
	Silent & Greatest	23.8%	33.3%	9.5%	33.3%	14.3%

Impact of online information on travel plans

The majority of respondents (86.5 percent) did not change their travel plans based on information found online (Figure 35). Eleven percent made a few changes, and 2.6 percent made significant changes.

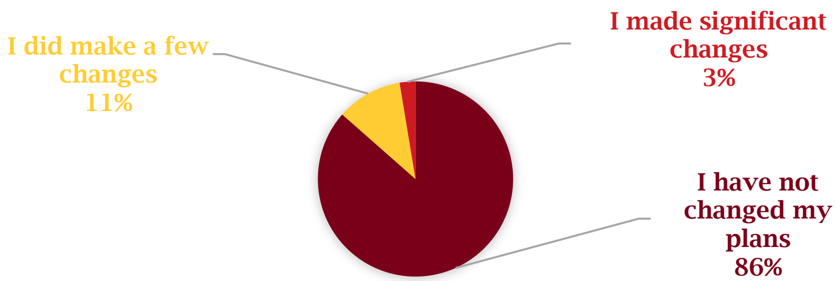

Fig. 35: Impact of online information on Fairmont area visitor survey respondents' travel plan (n=578)

Sharing information about the trip

Close to 70 percent of respondents (69.3 percent) indicated they would use mobile devices more than a personal computer to share trip information (Figure 36). Another 22.1 percent reported they would use mobile devices and a personal computer equally as frequently to share trip information. Only 8.6 percent stated they would use a personal computer more than a mobile device to share trip information.

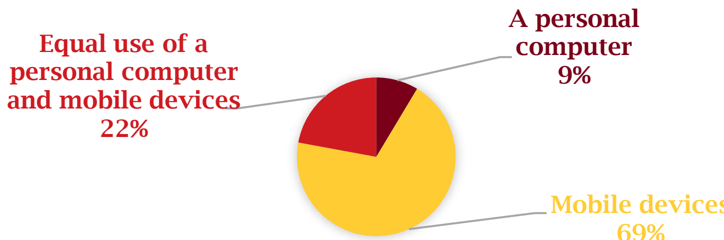

Fig. 36: Device use to share trip information by Fairmont area visitor survey respondents (n=535)

Close to half of respondents (48.4 percent) planned to share trip information through word of mouth (Figure 37). At least 35 percent planned to use text messages (40.3 percent) or Facebook (38.0 percent), and 19.8 percent planned to use email. Ten percent planned to use Instagram and nine percent Snapchat.

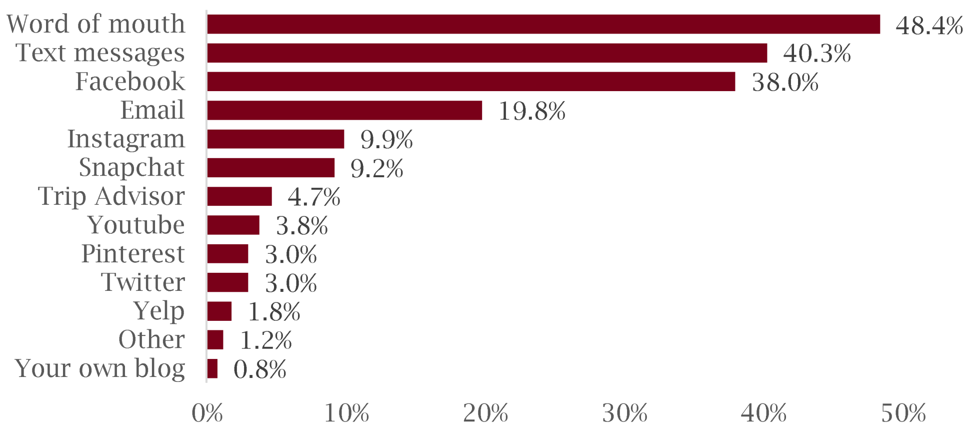

Fig. 37: Medium Fairmont area visitor survey respondents planned to use to share about their trips (n=739)

During summer, the oldest generations were more likely than the other three to share trip information via word of mouth (Table 12). Millennials were the most likely to use text messages and the oldest generations the least likely. Gen Xers were the most likely to use Facebook and the oldest generations the least likely. The oldest generations were the most likely to use email and millennials the least likely.

During fall, a similar percentage of the four generations planned to share trip information via word of mouth and text messages. Millennials and Gen Xers were the most likely to use Facebook and the oldest generations the least likely. Baby boomers and the oldest generations were the most likely to use email and millennials the least likely.

Table 12: Top four mediums Fairmont area visitor survey respondents would use to share about their trips, season by generation (n=739)

		Word of mouth	Text messages	Facebook	Email
Summer	Millennials	58.4%	58.4%	50.6%	10.4%
	Gen X	51.6%	48.4%	58.2%	16.5%
	Baby Boomer	53.8%	47.6%	37.2%	26.9%
	Silent & Greatest	82.4%	23.5%	17.6%	52.9%
Fall	Millennials	52.2%	52.2%	56.7%	13.4%
	Gen X	60.9%	44.9%	56.5%	18.8%
	Baby Boomer	69.0%	44.0%	37.0%	33.0%
	Silent & Greatest	47.6%	38.1%	28.6%	33.3%

DISCUSSION

Focusing on the demographics, reported spending, trip characteristics, and behaviors of Fairmont visitors during summer and fall, the following section discusses the implications of project findings.

Visitor characteristics

Gen Xers and baby boomers were more likely than the other two generations to have a household income of more than $100,000, indicating these two generations likely have discretionary income. Millennials were the most likely to have a household income of $50,000 or less. Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Illinois are the top five originating states. While the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area was an important originating market, it was not dominant.

Trip information and travel reason

Close to one-third of respondents indicated Fairmont was not their primary trip destination. During both seasons, the most frequently identified final destination was South Dakota. This finding is not surprising, given the location of Fairmont along Interstate Highway 90.

Lodging was the most frequently identified reason for stopping over in Fairmont. This finding indicates the lodging offerings in Fairmont were attractive enough for travelers to spend the night in the community. Visitors also stopped in Fairmont for breaks or food. These findings indicate the importance of maintaining rest areas and maximizing opportunities to market local dining options to travelers.

Fifty-six percent of respondents spent one or two nights in Fairmont, and a quarter did not stay overnight. Given visitors' average length of stay and income level, destination marketing organizations might consider encouraging baby boomers to extend their stay during summer and Gen Xers during fall. As a hotel/motel was the most frequently chosen lodging type, and baby boomers and Gen Xers were more likely to stay at a hotel during fall than summer, one possibility is for hotels to offer two or three day packages that target baby boomers and Gen Xers during the fall. Additionally, respondents identified lakes, fishing, and dining as attractions/activities that would attract them to stay longer in Fairmont during both seasons, with water activities also identified during summer. Currently, 54 percent of respondents were aware of Fairmont's lakes and 33.8 percent of lakeside dining. Therefore, it may be worthwhile to continue marketing the area's lakes, water activities (including fishing), and many dining options to entice visitors to stay longer.

More than one-third of respondents stayed with a friend or relative, and the percentage was even higher among millennials during the summer. This finding corresponds with the fact that millennials were more likely than the other three generations to identify visiting family/friends as the primary reason for visiting Fairmont. To encourage these visitors to engage with the community, it is important that local residents (i.e., visitor hosts) are aware of what the community offers in terms of restaurants, attractions, festivals/events, and recreational activities.

Overall, visitors were unlikely to use a lakeside campground if one were available. If one was built eventually, it may be worthwhile to specifically market this amenity to millennials and Gen Xers, as these two generations were somewhat more likely than baby boomers and the oldest generations to use a lakeside campground.

Visitor spending and activities

Among respondents, Gen Xers were the top spenders, especially during fall. Given their reported income level, catering to Gen Xers' interests and travel needs will likely generate more spending from this generation. Compared to the other three generations, millennials were more likely to attend festivals/events during the summer and to identify festivals/events as their primary reason for visiting Fairmont during the fall. As such, it may be worth exploring opportunities to increase millennials' spending related to festivals/events. Restaurants/bars was the second-highest spending category (after lodging), which corresponds with the finding that the most frequently participated in activity was dining out. Moreover, dining out was the second-most enjoyable tourism activity during both seasons and was also identified as an activity that would attract visitors to stay longer. Clearly, Fairmont has a good base of dining options, but opportunities may exist to add new ones to attract additional visitors to the area.

Shopping was the second-most frequently participated in activity (33.8 percent), and 38.6 percent of respondents were aware of shopping opportunities in Fairmont. Additionally, more than eight percent of respondents enjoyed shopping during both seasons, and seven percent identified shopping as an activity that would attract them to stay longer in Fairmont during the fall. As a result, opportunities exist to better market shopping opportunities in Fairmont to increase visitor spending and length of stay.

Trip planning and sharing

Nearly half of visitors planned their trip no more than two weeks in advance. This fact can be challenging for destination marketing organizations, as it is difficult and expensive to influence last-minute decisions. Furthermore, visitors were most likely to receive word-of-mouth travel information. Therefore, high-quality customer service is very important, given positive in-person experience tends to translate into word-of-mouth recommendations. A Google/Internet search was the second-most frequently used information source. Clearly, it is important for destination marketing organizations and tourism businesses to maintain an online presence. Considering the prevalence of smartphones and spontaneous nature of visitors when choosing which activities to participate in, it is critical that tourism businesses are accurately located on Google Map and Yelp, etc. This helps visitors easily identify the location of a desired activity.

Overall, millennials were most likely to share trip information via text message rather than email. Gen Xers were more likely than the other three generations to share via Facebook, while the oldest generations were more likely to share trip information via email and word of mouth. These findings reflect generational differences, millennials tend to rely heavily on text messaging to share trip information, and the oldest generations tend to share their experiences via word of mouth.

Lastly, while 38 percent of respondents planned to share trip information on Facebook, only 7.8 percent actually used the social media platform as an information source. This finding indicates that Facebook can be regarded as a tool to increase electronic word of mouth. Local businesses should encourage visitors to tag the business's Facebook page (assuming it has one) when sharing their experience on social media. This way, visitors' Facebook friends will see the business's Facebook page, which can create electronic word of mouth.

APPENDIX A: Summer season Fairmont area visitor questionnaire

University of Minnesota Tourism Center
Fairmont Area Visitor Questionnaire

1. Is Fairmont area your primary destination for this trip? ☐ Yes ☐ No, final destination is ______________________

2. What is the **primary** reason that you made this trip to Fairmont? (**Check only 1**)

☐ Fishing ☐ Lake activities ☐ Outdoor recreation other than fishing or lake activities ☐ Stopping over/Passing through
☐ Visit family/friends ☐ Second home ☐ Attractions/family fun ☐ Shopping ☐ Entertainment ☐ Sporting events
☐ Wedding ☐ Funeral ☐ Business/work (which industry:___________) ☐ Medical reason ☐ Relocation
☐ Museums/historic sites ☐ Festival/event (which one: _______) ☐ Other, please specify: _____________________

2a. If you could not come to the Fairmont area for this primary activity, where would you go: _______________________

3. If you are stopping over in Fairmont only, why did you choose to stop here? **(Check all that apply)**

☐ Food ☐ Gas/fuel ☐ Restroom ☐ Supplies/groceries ☐Stretch my legs/tired/need a break ☐ Other, please specify: _______

4. How frequently have you visited the Fairmont area?

Number of visits in past 12 months ______________ Number of visits in past 5 years __________________

5. Which one of the following best categorizes your group? (**Check only 1**)

☐ Alone ☐ Couple/partner ☐ Family ☐ Friends ☐ Family & friends ☐ Colleagues ☐ Other: _________

6. How many people (<u>including you</u>) are in your immediate travel party on this trip? ______

7. How many of your travel party are:

____ Under 18 ____ 18 – 25 years old ____ 26 – 35 years old ____ 36 – 50 years old ____ 51 – 69 years old ____ 70 or older

8. How many <u>total nights</u> do you plan to spend away from home **on this trip** (enter zero if none)? ____ nights

9. How many of these nights will be in the **Fairmont** Area (enter zero if none)? _____ nights **(If 0, go to question 11)**

10. If you are staying in the Fairmont Area, how many nights are you staying in **<u>each</u>** the following types of lodging?

____ Hotel/motel ____ Resort/commercial cabin ____ RV ____ Home of friend/relative ____ Your own vacation home
____ Vacation home of friend/relative ____ Bed & Breakfast ____ Vacation rental by owner/Airbnb ____ Tent

11. If there were a lakeside campground in Fairmont, how likely would you camp at the site?
☐ Highly likely ☐ Likely ☐ Unsure ☐ Unlikely ☐ Highly likely

12. Please estimate your travel group's spending **<u>in the Fairmont Area</u>** for the **previous 24 hours** of your stay:

Lodging $ ________ Transportation (includes gas) $________ Restaurants/Bars $ ________
Entertainment/Attractions $ ________ Groceries $________ Shopping $ ________
Outdoor recreation $ ________ Indoor recreation $ ________ Misc. $ ________ (explain: _______________)

12a. How many people (**<u>including you</u>**) are included in your spending estimate? _____

13. <u>While in Fairmont</u>, which of the following activities have you or members of your travel party participated in or will participate in? (**Check all that apply**)

General:
☐ Dining out
☐ Shopping
☐ Sightseeing
☐ Nightlife/evening entertainment

Participating in:
☐ Fishing
☐ Biking
☐ ATV/Off-road riding
☐ Boating/sailing
☐ Paddle boarding
☐ Canoeing/kayaking
☐ Running/jogging/walking
☐ Golfing
☐ Disc golfing

Visiting:
☐ Museums
☐ Historic sites
☐ Friends/relatives
☐ Parks
☐ Trails
☐ Aquatic park
☐ Hospital/clinic
☐ Other, please specify: ___________________

Attending:
☐ Festivals/events
☐ Sporting events
☐ Performing arts
☐ Wedding/family reunion
☐ Shows/music concerts

14. What amenities in Fairmont were you aware of **<u>prior to</u>** your arrival? **(Check all that apply)**

☐ Parks ☐ Trails ☐ Historic sites ☐ Lakes ☐ Lakeside dining ☐ Golf courses
☐ Aquatic Park ☐ Shopping ☐ Arts/entertainment ☐ Disc golf courses

15. How far in advance did you plan this trip? (**Check only 1**)

☐ Less than 1 week ☐ 1 to 2 weeks ☐ 2 to 4 weeks (1 month) ☐ 5 to 8 weeks (1 to 2 months)
☐ 9 to 13 weeks (2 to 3 months) ☐ 13+ weeks

16. What information sources did you use to **plan** this trip? (**Check all that apply**)

☐ Destination website ☐ Destination visitor guide ☐ Digital ad ☐ www.exploreminnesota.com
☐ Word of mouth ☐ Google/Internet search ☐ Magazine ad ☐ Newspaper ☐ Radio
☐ Social media: ☐ Online travel/review sites: ☐ Travel agent ☐ Other (Specify: ________________)
☐ Facebook ☐ TripAdvisor
☐ Twitter ☐ Priceline
☐ Instagram ☐ Expedia
☐ Pinterest ☐ Kayak
☐ Youtube ☐ Other travel/review sites (Specify: ______________________)

17. During this trip, have you made any changes to your original plans because of other travelers' opinions, reviews, photos, videos, or other information that you found online? (**Check only 1**)

☐ I have not changed my plans based on information found online
☐ I did make a few changes to my plans
☐ I made significant changes to my plans

18. The following two questions ask how you will **share** your trip experience to the Fairmont area:

18a. Which one of the following **devices** will you use more? (**Check only 1**)
☐ A personal computer ☐ Mobile devices ☐ Equal use of a personal computer and mobile devices

18b. Which of the following **medium** will you use? (**Check all that apply**)
☐ Word of mouth ☐ Text messages ☐ Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Snapchat
☐ Instagram ☐ Pinterest ☐ Trip Advisor ☐ Yelp ☐ Your own blog
☐ Email ☐ Youtube ☐ Other (Specify:_________)

19. What are your favorite tourism activities, events, and attractions in the Fairmont area?

____

____

20. What tourism activities, events or attractions would attract you to stay longer in Fairmont?

____

____

Finally, a few questions about you.

21. In what year were you born? ______________ **22.** What is the ZIPCODE of your primary residence? ___________

23. What is the highest grade or year of school that you have completed?

☐ Less than High School ☐ Some college ☐ BA or BS degree
☐ High school graduate (or GED) ☐ Associate college degree ☐ Post graduate or professional school

24. You are: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to answer

25. Please give us an estimate of your annual household income, before taxes?

☐ $25,000 or less ☐ $25,001 – $50,000 ☐ $50,001 – $75,000 ☐ $75,001 – $100,000
☐ $100,001 – $125,000 ☐ $125,001 – $150,000 ☐ $150,001 – $175,000 ☐ Over $175,000

Thank You!

APPENDIX B: Fall season Fairmont area visitor questionnaire

University of Minnesota Tourism Center
Fairmont Area Visitor Questionnaire

1. Is Fairmont area your primary destination for this trip? ☐ Yes
☐ No, final destination is ______________________

2. What is the **primary** reason that you made this trip to Fairmont? (**Check only 1**)
☐ Fishing ☐ Hunting ☐ Lake activities ☐ Outdoor recreation other than fishing, hunting or lake activities
☐ Stopping over/Passing through ☐ Second home ☐ Attractions/family fun ☐ Visit family/friends
☐ Shopping ☐ Entertainment ☐ Sporting events ☐ Wedding ☐ Funeral ☐ Relocation
☐ Business/work (which industry:___________) ☐ Medical reason ☐ Museums/historic sites
☐ Festival/event (which one: ________________) ☐ Other, please specify: _____________________

2a. If you could not come to the Fairmont area for this primary activity, where would you go: _______________________

3. If you are stopping over in Fairmont only, why did you choose to stop here? **(Check all that apply)**
☐ Food ☐ Gas/fuel ☐ Restroom ☐ Supplies/groceries ☐ Stretch my legs/tired/need a break
☐ Other, please specify: ______

4. How frequently have you visited the Fairmont area?

Number of visits in past 12 months ______________ Number of visits in past 5 years _________________

5. Which one of the following best categorizes your group? (**Check only 1**)
☐ Alone ☐ Couple/partner ☐ Family ☐ Friends ☐ Family & friends ☐ Colleagues ☐ Other: ____________

6. How many people (<u>including you</u>) are in your immediate travel party on this trip? ______

7. How many of your travel party are:

____ Under 18 ____ 18 – 25 years old ____ 26 – 35 years old ____ 36 – 50 years old ____ 51 – 69 years old ____ 70 or older

8. How many <u>total nights</u> do you plan to spend away from home **on this trip** (enter zero if none)? ____ nights

9. How many of these nights will be in the **Fairmont** Area (enter zero if none)? _____ nights **(If 0, go to question 11)**

10. If you are staying in the Fairmont Area, how many nights are you staying in **<u>each</u>** the following types of lodging?

____ Hotel/motel ____ Resort/commercial cabin ____ RV ____ Home of friend/relative ____ Your own vacation home

____ Vacation home of friend/relative ____ Bed & Breakfast ____ Vacation rental by owner/Airbnb ____ Tent

11. If there were a lakeside campground in Fairmont, how likely would you camp at the site?
☐ Highly likely ☐ Likely ☐ Unsure ☐ Unlikely ☐ Highly unlikely

12. Please estimate your travel group's spending **<u>in the Fairmont Area</u>** for the **previous 24 hours** of your stay:

Lodging $ ________ Transportation (includes gas) $________ Restaurants/Bars $ ________

Entertainment/Attractions $ ________ Groceries $________ Shopping $ ________

Outdoor recreation $ ________ Indoor recreation $ ________ Misc. $ ________ (explain: _______________)

12a. How many people (**<u>including you</u>**) are included in your spending estimate? _____

13. **<u>While in Fairmont</u>**, which of the following activities have you or members of your travel party participated in or will participate in? (**Check all that apply**)

General:
☐ Dining out
☐ Shopping
☐ Sightseeing
☐ Nightlife/evening entertainment

Participating in:
☐ Fishing
☐ Hunting
☐ Biking
☐ ATV/Off-road riding
☐ Boating/sailing
☐ Paddle boarding
☐ Canoeing/kayaking
☐ Running/jogging/walking
☐ Golfing
☐ Disc golfing

Visiting:
☐ Museums
☐ Historic sites
☐ Friends/relatives
☐ Parks
☐ Trails
☐ Aquatic park
☐ Hospital/clinic
☐ Other, please specify: ___________________

Attending:
☐ Festivals/events
☐ Sporting events
☐ Performing arts
☐ Wedding/family reunion
☐ Shows/music concerts

14. What amenities in Fairmont were you aware of **<u>prior to</u>** your arrival? **(Check all that apply)**

☐ Parks ☐ Trails ☐ Historic sites ☐ Lakes ☐ Lakeside dining ☐ Golf courses
☐ Aquatic Park ☐ Shopping ☐ Arts/entertainment ☐ Disc golf courses

15. How far in advance did you plan this trip? (**Check only 1**)

☐ Less than 1 week ☐ 1 to 2 weeks ☐ 2 to 4 weeks (1 month) ☐ 5 to 8 weeks (1 to 2 months)
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16. What information sources did you use to **<u>plan</u>** this trip? (**Check all that apply**)

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☐ Social media: ☐ Online travel/review sites: ☐ Travel agent ☐ Other (Specify: ________________)
☐ Facebook ☐ TripAdvisor
☐ Twitter ☐ Priceline
☐ Instagram ☐ Expedia
☐ Pinterest ☐ Kayak
☐ Youtube ☐ Other travel/review sites (Specify: ______________________)

17. During this trip, have you made any changes to your original plans because of other travelers' opinions, reviews, photos, videos, or other information that you found online? (**Check only 1**)

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☐ I made significant changes to my plans

18. The following two questions ask how you will **<u>share</u>** your trip experience to the Fairmont area:

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18b. Which of the following **medium** will you use? (**Check all that apply**)
☐ Word of mouth ☐ Text messages ☐ Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Snapchat
☐ Instagram ☐ Pinterest ☐ Trip Advisor ☐ Yelp ☐ Your own blog
☐ Email ☐ Youtube ☐ Other (Specify:_________)

19. What are your favorite tourism activities, events, and attractions in the Fairmont area?

____

____

20. What tourism activities, events or attractions would attract you to stay longer in Fairmont?

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Finally, a few questions about you.

21. In what year were you born? ______________ **22.** What is the ZIPCODE of your primary residence? ___________

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25. Please give us an estimate of your annual household income, before taxes?

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☐ $100,001 – $125,000 ☐ $125,001 – $150,000 ☐ $150,001 – $175,000 ☐ Over $175,000

Thank You!